

Serial No. : 10/526,795
Filing Date : September 19, 2005
Page 7

REMARKS

The amendments and remarks presented herein are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action of December 19, 2006. Accordingly, reconsideration is requested.

Disposition of Claims.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5, 8 and 10-13 have been amended. Claims 16-20 have been added.

Specification.

The Abstract of the disclosure has been objected to for improper language and format. Accordingly, a new Abstract has been provided.

Also, the title has been deemed not descriptive of the invention. Accordingly, the title has been amended so that it is clearly indicative of the invention: "Load-bearing device for lifting and lowering containers."

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, because the exact meaning of the recited phrase "said horizontal guiding cross-bars being guided on vertical beams of the support frame at both ends" is not clearly understood, according to the Office Action. Accordingly, this phrase in claim 1 has been amended to clarify that "said horizontal guiding cross-bars being guided on said vertical support pillars of the support frame at both ends." This amendment is fully supported by the original application.

Additionally, the Office Action states that claims 8 and 10-13 recite "a traction means" which refers to "a chain" and it appears that the claimed language is misleading. Accordingly, the phrase "traction devices" has been removed from claims 2, 5, 8 and 10-13. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is respectfully requested.

Serial No. : 10/526,795
Filing Date : September 19, 2005
Page 8

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Focke et al. (5,338,150). Because Focke does not disclose or suggest each of the elements claimed in the present invention, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Focke does not disclose a device in which the lengthwise displacement of a piston rod is transformed into a synchronous upward and downward movement of horizontal guiding cross-bars. Specifically, Focke refers to a palletizer 23 for lifting cartons 10. Palletizer 23 includes an articulated arm 24 and a gripper 27 positioned at the end of arm 24 (FIG. 1). Gripper 27 functions to grip a carton 10 but does not function to move carton 10. Upward and downward movement of gripper 27 and carton 10 is accomplished by pivot bearing 25, which can be moved up and down together with arm 24. Thus, the lifting and lowering of carton 10 of Focke is not caused by the actuation of hydraulic cylinders 56, 57. Actuation of cylinders 56, 57 only causes opening and closing of carrying arms 29, 30 of gripper 27, i.e. the gripping of carton 10 by carrying arms 29, 30.

Nor does Focke disclose a device in which the lifting or lowering of a load is accomplished by the movement of at least two horizontal cross-bars, spaced apart from each other and connected to a load-receiving device. Although the Office Action refers to "horizontal guiding cross-bars (51)," it is respectfully submitted that the element 51 of Focke is actually a bearing.

Additionally, Focke does not disclose a device having a support frame wherein the horizontal guiding cross-bars of the device are guided on vertical support pillars of the support frame for the lifting and lowering of the container. Focke discloses a flat, rectangular support frame 46, which suspends two carrying arms 29, 30 at opposite ends. The support frame of Focke does not include vertical support pillars.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2-13 is respectfully requested. The amendments presented herein are fully supported by the application as filed. No new matter has been added. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly requested.

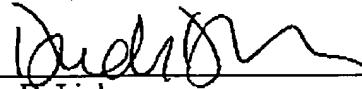
Serial No. : 10/526,795
Filing Date : September 19, 2005
Page 9

If Examiner Chin has any questions, Examiner Chin is requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

HERMANN FRANZEN and JOACHIM KROLL

By: Van Dyke, Gardner, Linn & Burkhart, LLP



Deidre D. Link
Registration No. 57 184
2851 Charlevoix Drive, S.E., Suite 207
P.O. Box 888695
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49588-8695
(616) 975-5500

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Enclosures